CONFERENCE connection
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SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE, UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

February 1, 2019

From the Transitional Conference Minister

"Who am I? How do I know?" These were two questions that were given to the youth at the recent Winter Youth Event by the speaker, Robyn Henderson Espinoza. I have been pondering them and realizing that sometimes I probably define myself in ways that are not evident in my behavior. The questions also seem valuable for a congregation to consider: "who are you? How do you know?" – and to add to that - "how do other people know?" We can say that we are a friendly church, or that we welcome everyone, or that we are concerned about social justice. But how do we know that we are those things? What do we say or do that witnesses to that? Can others see that in our attitudes, responses, and actions, etc.

So, of course, the next questions are: "Who is the Southeast Conference? How do we know?" The Conference is not ultimately an organization or structure (although those things assist the Conference in being who it is). Given that our connections as local churches and authorized ministers are based on covenant, who are we? How do we know?

Another thought that I have been pondering since the Winter Youth Event is the role of imagination in our lives. It is imagination and vision that open our thoughts to possibility and provide the basis for change. Who is the Southeast Conference? And what is our vision for what we might become? When we can answer those questions clearly, we have the basis

for creating possibilities of how to get there.

I invite you to ponder and reflect. I also invite you to send me your thoughts (cburch@secucc.org)!

Blessings, Char

News from the Conference Office

"Coffee with Char" *(a virtual conversation)*

All authorized ministers are invited to “have coffee” with Char through our virtual technology. We will use our Zoom meeting platform, which provides room for 50 people to gather, either through the computer or on the phone. There are two coffee hours set up:

- Tuesday, February 26 at 10:00 a.m. Eastern time (Reserve a spot)
- Thursday, February 28 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern time (Reserve a spot)

After you have made a reservation, you will receive an email a few days prior to the reserved date providing you with the link for the connection.

Remember that this can be done via phone, without the need to use a computer. If you need assistance making a “reservation” please contact Heather at hfosburgh@secucc.org or 404-719-6572. Come and join with your colleagues in conversation!

Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2019. We encourage you to include these prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers. (The entire 2019 prayer list will be available soon.)

Week of February 4

- Safe Harbor Family Church UCC; Flowood, Mississippi
- Dwight Andrews
- Robin Lee Fitch
- Gail McGill
- Jodi Yarini

Week of February 11

- Garden of Grace UCC; Columbia, South Carolina
- Thomas Eckert
- Susan Mitchell
- Helen Smith
- Patricia Greeves

Churches in Transition: Central Congregational, Atlanta, GA; United Church of Huntsville, Huntsville AL; First Congregational, Birmingham AL; Pilgrimage, Marietta GA; First Congregational Christian, Montgomery AL; First Congregational, Savannah GA; Peace Church, Clemson SC

Our First Two Entries in the Yearbook!

It's time again for reporting of Yearbook statistics for the past year. Thank you to **Phoenix UCC** (Wildersville, TN) and **Unity Worship Center** (Montgomery, AL) for completing the Yearbook for 2018. It is not too late to add your church to the list. If you think your church has completed your yearbook but are not on the list, please email Heather at hfosburgh@secucc.org. The deadline for entering data is February 28, 2019. Visit our website for instructions about how submit your information.

Mandatory Annual Authorized Minister Review

As a reminder, it's time once again for the **Yearly Information Review for All Authorized Ministers** in the Southeast Conference. You can either fill out the form online here or you can download and print the form here and mail it to the Southeast Conference, PO Box 1950, Decatur GA 30031.

Winter 2019 Grant Applications

In July 2009, we launched the **Transforming Churches - Transforming Lives** campaign with the goal of raising money that would help carry the Southeast Conference into a new phase of growth and renewal, building on the remarkable progress achieved during the prior decade. For the last number of years we have been in the distribution of funds phase of the campaign.

Transforming Churches • Transforming Lives
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE
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For the Winter 2019 grant cycle we began accepting applications on January 17, 2019 for grants. This cycle will end March 7, 2019. There are a few steps to keep in mind before applying:

- If you **have been awarded a grant in the past**, please make sure your "Project Evaluation Form" has been completed and submitted. This form can be found on our website. This is necessary and needed before your application can be considered.
- Please read and follow the guidelines (these can be found on the application form).
- **A detailed budget** should be submitted with the application. This is most important.
- If at all possible, please submit your application **before the deadline date.** That allows for any questions or concerns to be addressed prior to the deadline.

If at any time you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to Generosity Coordinator Carrole Moss at cmoss@secucc.org.

News from the Wider Church

Pastoral Letter from Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, UCC General Minister and President

"Now more than ever, the Holy Spirit of the Living God and the Risen Christ is seeking to partner with anyone committed to unifying the human community." From a pastoral letter from the Rev. John C. Dorhauer, General Minister & President. If your congregation did not receive a copy of the letter, you can read it on our website.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
a just world for all

Refreshed Denominational Logos Now Available

Building on the process to refresh and update the visual identity of the United Church of Christ, the denomination's National Setting has just released refreshed logos and an expanded color palette for use by Churches, Conferences and UCC affiliates and organizations.

The UCC began the transition to a new logo for the denomination at General Synod 2017 in Baltimore, a process undertaken to provide a refreshed, updated and consistent look to the UCC Brand. That transition continued throughout 2018. The new tagline is "A Just World for All" rather than "God is Still Speaking,".

If you are using the denominational logos in your electronic and print media, please update the graphics to include the correct logo (that includes the ® Registered Mark) and correct colors. The media is availble on the UCC website: ucc.org/about-us_ucc-logo.

News from Our Local Congregations

Annual Meeting Time!

It is Annual Meeting time for many of our local churches. Pleasant Hill Community Church in Tennessee experienced their Annual Meeting as a Celebration Party (above).

MLK Day of Service at Kirkwood UCC in Atlanta

2019 marked the 11th year of participation by Kirkwood UCC in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. This year KUCC gave $1,000 to Kirkwood Cares, a new organization in Kirkwood that hosted the first MLK workday in Kirkwood neighborhood of Atlanta.

Osher Lifelong Learning at Clemson

Peace UCC, Clemson, SC is a Community Partner with the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute of Clemson University. Part of their agreement for meeting in the building is providing 12 learning courses a year! The third Sunday of the month they gather for a dinner church – with great food!

Fairfield Glade Church Celebrates Sanctuary Renovation

Fairfield Glade Community Church (TN) recently celebrated the renovation of their sanctuary and the installation of two windows representing their connection to the UCC and the Presbyterian Church (USA).

We love sharing news from our local congregations! Please send us pictures and explanations of special events at your church that we can share on our website, social media, and in this email newsletter. We think it's a great way to share ideas for events, as well as celebrating what other UCC churches are doing!
Email us at communications@secucc.org.

Training and Learning Opportunities

Registration Open for "Convergence Leadership Project" Cohort

The UCC's Center for Progressive Renewal just opened registration for the next cohort of an online leadership development program called the Convergence Leadership Project. Author and national faith leader, Brian McLaren, is the director of the program, supported by Rev. Dr. Jacqui Lewis from Middle Collegiate Church in NY, Diana Butler Bass, Bruce Reyes-Chow, Lindsay Andreolli-Comstock, Jim Keat and others. Living in the age of intersectional movement building, we need leaders and congregations prepared to lead the way. After two years of development, CLP has proven

to be a very powerful program for helping congregations make the transition from being "organized churches" to "organizing churches."

Leaders (lay and ordained) must be nominated, interviewed and accepted into the program. We are looking for congregations with imagination, courage and capacity. Church size or location doesn't impact the outcome of the experience – it's more about an openness to change and awareness that a new kind of imagination is needed to move the progressive faith movement forward. We will work with applicants on pricing if that becomes an issue. Read more about this program on our website.

Upcoming Events at Candler School of Theology

Emory's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta is hosting a wide variety of public events this spring. Check out the full list below, and join us in exploring how theology intersects with current issues in our world. The featured events this semester include:

Giving Freedom: A Right-Side-Up Approach to Church Fundraising
March 22 • 7:00–9:00 p.m.
March 23 • 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
Cannon Chapel Sanctuary • Ticket range: $7-$24
Adam Hamilton, pastor of Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas, will give the keynote address on March 22 at 7:00 p.m. On Saturday, seven guest speakers will present: Kerry Alys Robinson, Olu Brown, James Jordan, Mandy Sloan McDow, Shannaan Dawda, Starsky D. Wilson, and Audrey Hindes.

Elizabeth Johnson on "Is God's Charity Enough for Bears?"
March 27 • 11:00 a.m.–12:45 p.m.
Candler School of Theology, Room 252 • Free; lunch included; registration required
Candler's Catholic Studies program presents Sister Elizabeth A. Johnson, C.S.J., author and Distinguished Professor of Theology Emerita at Fordham University. In her lecture, Johnson will explore the human relationship to the natural world within the context of the dangerous ecological crisis our planet faces.

Visit the Candler calendar of events for the full spring schedule.

Healthy Boundaries Training for 2019

As most are aware, Healthy Boundary training is now **mandatory** in the United Church of Christ. These workshops are intended to equip ordained, commissioned, and licensed clergy, as well as other church leaders and staff, to understand healthy boundaries in ministry relationships. There will be two workshop options at five different times and locations during 2019. The two workshops are:

- **Healthy Boundaries 101:** Fundamentals is a foundational workshop in healthy boundaries with an emphasis on power and vulnerability and discussions on transference, friendships, dating, and self-care.
- **Healthy Boundaries 201:** Beyond Basics and Into the Internet is an advanced discussion of healthy boundaries for clergy and church leaders, designed for those who have completed Healthy Boundaries 101, and emphasizing internet and social media boundaries.

Full details and the calendar of trainings is on our website: secucc.org/news-and-events/healthy-boundaries-workshops/.

Conference Calendar

Annual Meeting Planning Session
March 12 @ 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm EDT
Online Virtual Meeting

Boundary Training
May 29 @ 1:00 pm - 8:00 pm CDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

Clergy Retreat
May 30 @ 10:00 am - May 31 @ 12:00 pm CDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

MID Retreat
May 30 @ 10:00 am - May 31 @ 12:00 pm CDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

SEC UCC Annual Meeting
May 31 @ 12:00 pm - June 2 @ 12:00 pm EDT
Pleasant Hill Community Church

UCC General Synod

June 21 - June 25
Milwaukee, WI

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